

Washington, DC - Working to fight the injustice along the United States borders, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez (CA-39) joined Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee (TX-18) and members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus in announcing a critical piece of legislation, The Commercial Alien Smuggling Elimination Act of 2003: The CASE Act (HR-2630) in a press conference on Wednesday July 16 on Capitol Hill.

As an original co-sponsor of this bill, Congresswoman Sánchez recognizes the serious problems that commercial alien smuggling creates.

“The truth is, deaths along the border occur far too often. For the past 18 years, there have been border deaths of 200-400 people almost every year. The bottom line, to me, is that people are dying and this bill is a good approach to combating alien smuggling.”

The CASE Act takes an innovative three-pronged approach to addressing the problem of alien smuggling. Drafted with the assistance of government officials, this bill provides incentives to informants, {such as cash rewards (resident status)} and includes increased sentences for reckless commercial smuggling operations. The final part of the bill focuses on education and outreach to people both here and abroad, to get the message out about the penalties and informant incentives.

“Alien smuggling is a problem that will not disappear. The horrible incident this past May in Victoria, Texas, in which 18 people died by asphyxiation and heatstroke inside a tractor-trailer, is just one example of the dangers of commercial alien smuggling. This bill is about working together to decrease innocent human death,” said Sánchez.

Congresswoman Sánchez also commented in Spanish: “El problema del trafico de personas es horrible. Tenemos que dar mucha atención a estas situaciones para prevenir los muertos de humanos inocentes. Estoy bein dedicada a luchar contra el trafico de personas.”